

HJR0228

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 228
By Odom

A RESOLUTION To urge the Congress of the United States to
ban the use of methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE)
as a fuel additive.

WHEREAS, The General Assembly of the State of Tennessee wishes the citizens of this State and of the United States to have clean water, clean air, and an environment free of toxic or otherwise harmful agents for present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, The supply of gasoline available to citizens of Tennessee and of this Nation presently contain a number of constituent compounds and additives that may pose risks to the public health and to the environment, one of which is methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE); and

WHEREAS, MBTE has been detected in 47 water supplies and was the sole contaminant in 11 of those supplies; one contained MTBE in excess of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warning level; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, the City of Santa Monica found MTBE in two (2) of its waterwell fields; in response to the health risk, fifty percent (50%) of the city's drinking water supply was shut down, and the city had to purchase replacement water at a significant cost; and

WHEREAS, Studies have shown that MTBE is resistant to natural biodegradation; monitoring wells have shown little overall reduction in MTBE concentration over several years. Those findings indicate that once present in a water supply, MTBE must be removed or there will be a tendency for concentrations to rise; and

WHEREAS, The EPA Blue Ribbon Panel, made up of leading experts from the public health, environmental and scientific communities, fuel industry and water utilities, recommends that MTBE supplies be reduced, research be accelerated, and that MTBE eventually be banned as a fuel additive; and

WHEREAS, At low levels of concentration, the smell and taste of MTBE can make water undrinkable; at higher levels of concentration, MTBE can create cancer clusters and cause other non-cancerous health effects in animals; and

WHEREAS, The continued use of MTBE as a fuel additive may constitute a continuing threat to the groundwater and drinking water supply of this State and of the Nation; and

WHEREAS, MTBE is present in only 3-4% of the gasoline sold in Tennessee; this indicates that a ban on MTBE would not significantly effect the supply of gasoline; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the Congress of the United States is hereby urged to take action to ban the use of MTBE as a fuel additive.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That enrolled copies of this resolution be sent to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States and to each member of Tennessee's Congressional delegation.